THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN

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GEORGE BARLOW

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THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS, 10 VOLS.

VOX CLAMANTIS: SONNETS AND POEMS.

THE HIGHER LOVE.

#44341

THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN

PROSE ESSAYS

BY

GEORGE BARLOW

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LONDON

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THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN

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"GREAT poets are bisexual; male and "female at once, motherly not less than "fatherly in their instincts towards little "children; from the day when Homer put "Astyanax into the arms of Hector to the "day when Hugo found the sweetest of "all cradle-songs on the lips of the death-"stricken Fantine."

So wrote Mr Swinburne, in his article on "Tennyson and Musset," and his words are absolutely true. Nor did the principle of divine motherhood, which lies deep at the heart of the universe, ever find nobler human expression than in "Rizpah," the poem which called forth the above remarks. Whatever may have been Tennyson's limitations, it is safe to say that the author of such profoundly sweet and passionate verses will always rank among great poets. But note that the poem is great just because of the feminine element in it. Yet we feel that a woman could not have written it. The "bisexual" combination is needed, the mingling of strength and sweetness,

force and tenderness, which constitutes the highest form of poetic, that is to say the noblest form of human, personality.

The very essence of sin seems to me to be the wilful rebellion against the principle of divine motherhood, the principle which should sway and rule the universe. It is astonishing to find, on careful examination, how completely all great and noble poetry of the emotional order depends for its nobleness and greatness on the ceaseless assertion of this one principle. Swinburne's "Songs before Sunrise," rightly understood, is one long cry of love, one mighty wave of adoration of God the Divine Mother. It is in one sense a wholly feminine book. It is the feminine in man responding to the feminine in God. It is written in the spirit which makes a woman rush to a wounded animal, and hold it to her heart. When once our eyes are open to this, all poetry becomes clear to us.

"I do not bid thee spare me, O dreadful mother!
I pray thee that thou spare not, of thy grace.
How were it with me then, if ever another
Should come to stand before thee in this my place?

"Thou art the player whose organ-keys are thunders,
And I beneath thy foot the pedal prest;
Thou art the ray whereat the rent night sunders,
And I the cloudlet borne upon thy breast.

"I have love at least, and have not fear, and part not
From thine unnavigable and wingless way;
Thou tarriest, and I have not said thou art not,
Nor all thy night long have denied thy day." [1]

No man who had in him the masculine attributes and nothing more, could by any possibility write such lines as those. To me they seem to be the direct result of an *afflatus* proceeding from some unseen feminine force, a force, in this instance, of unspeakable purity, indeed of purity so intense that it becomes terrible. In fact, all Mr Swinburne's poems referring to the Republic of his dreams are terrible, just as are Victor Hugo's poems on the same subject,—terrible in the depth of their love, in the height of their aspiration. Both to Hugo and to Swinburne—as also to Mazzini—the ideal Republic stood for heaven made visible upon earth, God manifest amid humanity. Their dreams have not been realised, but it is well to understand what manner of faith was in these great men, and towards what transcendent end their real efforts were directed.

[1] Swinburne's "Mater Triumphalis."

"Very life that could it die would leave the soul dead,
Face whereat all fears and forces flee away,
Breath that moves the world as winds a flower-bell folded,
Feet that trampling the gross darkness beat out day." [1]

I have often thought that the three lines I have italicised implicitly contain the whole of theology, and the whole secret of the universe. The second of the three has in its exquisite undulations of sound the movements of flowers swayed by the tenderest and gentlest summer breeze. But the real point is that the

"Breath that moves the world as winds a flower-bell folded,"

is indeed the breath of God, the breath of the Divine Spirit which goes forth upon creation, and without whose ceaseless influx into man and Nature, both would perish. The poet in his passionate apostrophe is addressing

"The mother, the Republic universal,"

but it is impossible to help seeing that he is really mingling with a greater Spirit than the spirit of the Republic, and that the

"Face whereat all fears and forces flee away"

is in very truth the face of God.

[1] Swinburne's "Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic."

* * * *

In one point alone the masculine poetic vision seems keener and more subtle than the feminine. It is certain that the artistic sense of form, the Greek feeling for physical beauty, is as yet a gift confined almost wholly to men. It is possible that women may one day develop it, but it is not very easy to conceive of a great woman-sculptor. Women seem almost grotesquely deficient in any true apprehension of womanly beauty. They are jealous of each other's physical charms, but they appear to have no real insight into the glory of form, the wonder of physical beauty. They are supreme in the region of the *soul*, and, perhaps for that very reason, defective upon the side that finds expression through the sculptor and the artist.

Just on account of acknowledged feminine supremacy in the soul-sphere, we need the presence of the feminine element in poetic thought, in order to achieve, if possible, that most difficult of all tasks, the blending of the worship of holiness with the worship of beauty. Poets of the male sex nearly always break down at this point; partly, I think, from want of know-

ledge of the less exalted sides of woman's character, a knowledge which woman herself possesses in its most intimate details. Men frequently grow confused: they confound the Venus through whose beauty throbs the glory of the divine feminine with the Venus whose task upon earth is destruction, and whose birthplace is hell.

The late Arthur O'Shaughnessy,[1] as far as I am aware, is the only English poet who has consciously and definitely discerned the difference between the two Venuses; the fact that some perfectly pure and beautiful God manifests Himself, or Herself, through supreme physical beauty; and the still further, and all-important, fact that the highest holiness can only be reached through a combination of the worship of beauty and the worship of purity.

"If with surpassing revelation rare,
The mystery of the one ineffable line,
Transcending time and space, changelessly fair,
Before and after all things, law divine,
Enter the soul and make religion there,

[1] This writer's early death removed him from the scene before his poems had received the attention they deserved. His "Epic of Women" was penetrated by a thoroughly Greek sense of the glory of beauty, which in his later book, "Songs of a Worker," had developed into a profound belief that Beauty and Holiness are really intended to blend into one inseparable unity.

"Then is man saved; *for in that soul's clear sight*
No falsehood or impurity shall stand;
That soul shall fashion darkness into light
And, moulding human clay with holy hand,
Exalt man pure upon a marble height."

I think the above stanzas, from the "Dialogue between two Venuses," contain the absolute and final truth, very beautifully expressed. The mystery of form, "the mystery of the one ineffable line," involves the secret which we in England always fail to grasp, but which we of all nations most need to understand. Our Anglo-Saxon temperament seems to pull dead against the apprehension of a truth so sublime and transcendental as that perceived by O'Shaughnessy—who followed Keats and Shelley, but with a clearer self-consciousness. That God Himself is the foundation and source, not only of moral qualities, but also of all pure and noble physical beauty, and that woman, as the chief exponent on earth of physical beauty, reveals through her marvellously subtle and complex organism a splendour, a sweetness, a tenderness, first organically situate, if we may so express ourselves, in the feminine side of the Divine Nature,—this truth, though it seems to me indisput-

able, though every great poet of the passional type has practically taught it, and though it is implicit in the statement "God "said, Let us make man [that is, man-"woman, the divine humanity] in *our* "image, after *our* likeness"—this truth, which contains in it the redemption of the world from sin if we could only grasp and live up to it, seems too strange, too wonderful, too sacred for the Anglo-Saxon mind readily to assimilate.

Bearing these thoughts in mind, we shall be better able to understand the immense significance of the feminine element in poetry. It is curious to recall that, some thirty years ago, the present Poet Laureate, in his "Poetry of the Period," recognised that the writers of the time are very largely occupied with the feelings and hopes of women. He regretted that it should be so, taking, I think, a wrong or inadequate view of the matter. I remember that he was at very great pains to point out that, while Byron, in his opinion, was constantly "sublime," sublimity was a word which could never rightly be applied to the work of Tennyson. That was what Mr Austin thought in the early seventies. He also

believed that Browning was absolutely no poet whatever, merely a rugged original thinker. And he held, very definitely held, that Swinburne, though certainly a poet, was hysterical, weak, and effeminate. That was some time ago, and many things have changed since then. Browning and Tennyson are dead. Mr Austin has become Poet Laureate. Swinburne is assuredly not regarded as hysterical and effeminate. It is interesting, sometimes, to look back, and to note the development of literary events and the changes in literary judgments.

Among other things, we can now clearly see how it was that Mr Austin was misled in his estimate of Swinburne,—as so many critics, Charles Kingsley among the number, have been misled in their estimate of Shelley. It was not unnatural. Writing about the year 1870, Mr Austin did not sufficiently grasp the fact that the poetry of the period was bound to be, that for a long time to come it was bound to be, principally concerned with women's ideas and aspirations.

"Great poets are bisexual"—the central truth lies there. Mr Austin in his "Poets of the Period" did not realise this

truth, nor did Kingsley in the well-known Essay on "Shelley and Byron," which appears in his "Miscellanies." In the days when Kingsley and Mr Austin were writing, the physiological side of genius had not been patiently analysed. Kingsley seems to have thought Byron a greater poet than Shelley because of the rough masculine force in "the sturdy peer, proud "of his bull-neck and his boxing, who "kept bears and bull-dogs." He speaks disparagingly of Shelley as "the gentle "and sensitive vegetarian." But such criticism as this is extremely superficial and misleading. Rough masculine force is a very desirable thing, and it does much of the most splendid work of the world. But it does not make a man into a great poet, though some degree of it may be necessary to form the basis of the poetic organisation. It is very possible that Shelley had not enough of the strong masculine element in him. Neither Shelley, Keats, nor Kingsley himself, had in them the physical vigour necessary to carry a poet to a great age, with unimpaired force of genius. I can hardly imagine such beings as Keats or Shelley at the age of sixty, or seventy, or eighty: the thing is unthinkable. Their

highest good fortune lay in the fact that they both died young, while still undegraded by contact with the darker sides of life. But to say that one man was poetically greater than another because he was "proud of his bull-neck and his boxing" and "kept bears and bull-dogs," strikes us to-day as somewhat childish. Kingsley did not go to the root of the matter, he did not look at the thing from the organic point of view. It is just because Shelley was organically "gentle and sensitive," just because his brain and nervous system were unique in their degree of fineness, that he became a greater poet than the man who "kept bears and bull-dogs" and "had no objection to a pot of beer."

Kingsley himself was in a very marked degree "bisexual," using the word in Mr Swinburne's sense. All the greatest things in him sprang from his double nature, from the blending of the masculine and feminine elements in his constitution. The lower things in him arose from a certain *residuum* in his temperament of that mere rough male force which he praises Byron for possessing. Kingsley's exultation over the death of a fox, his extraordinary want of perception of the intense anguish undergone by the

hunted and mutilated animal, these were traits connected not with the noble feminine, but with the ignoble masculine, in his composition. Shelley was gentle and sensitive enough, womanly enough, to have endured agony at the thought of the agony of the fox. Yet he was masculine enough to write the tremendous tragedy of the "Cenci."

There is a side of Kingsley's character which seems to me unutterably great and grand. But this was the poetic, the feminine side—the side connecting Kingsley's spirit with the pure and loving Spirit of God, the side which found expression when "on one "of his last nights on earth, his daughter "heard him exclaim, *How beautiful God "is!*"[1] Yes: the more we look into the matter, the less we can escape the conclusion that the tender womanly attributes are those which link man most closely with God. It is many years since I read "Sand-"ford and Merton," but I think I remember that Harry undergoes a thrashing from the Squire sooner than reveal the road the hunted fox has taken. Which was more truly masculine, or, in another sense, more godlike and feminine, Harry or the Squire?

[1] See "Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memories of his Life." Edited by his wife.

Still clearer will these things become, if we examine the work of our modern male and militant poet, Mr Rudyard Kipling. If Charles Kingsley were alive to-day, that side of his nature which worshipped Carlyle and approved of the conduct of Governor Eyre in Jamaica, would doubtless feel keen sympathy with Mr Kipling's "Barrack-Room Ballads" and "Departmental Ditties," and also with the poet's ceaseless glorification of the animal and pugnacious element in humanity. But I make bold to say that even in this decisive instance our thesis holds true. Mr Kipling is a lesser singer when he is male, rough, aggressive, unisexual. In his vehement apostrophes to "The Blood,"[1] in his eager appeals to the fierce warrior-spirit of the Anglo-Saxon "dominant race," he is, no doubt, sounding a strong and stern war-trumpet, but he is not poetically great. None the less, there are moments when he

[1] "Truly ye come of The Blood; slower to bless than to ban;
Little used to lie down at the bidding of any man.

"Also we will make promise. So long as The Blood endures,
I shall know that your good is mine; ye shall feel that my strength is yours."

"A Song of the English."

is poetically great. And they are the moments when, even amid the smell of hospitals and the reek of battlefields, he is lifted up by a spirit of ineffable tenderness. He has these moments, and at such times Mr Kipling is a very great poet. His genius is then in touch with the Divine. The breath that moves the world "as "winds a flower-bell folded" is inspiring him.

Listen to the following lines from the "Dirge of Dead Sisters," a poem published in Mr Kipling's "Five Nations":—

"Who recalls the midnight by the bridge's wrecked abutment
(Autumn rain that rattled like a Maxim on the tin?)
And the lightning-dazzled levels and the streaming, straining waggons,
And the faces of the Sisters as they bore the wounded in?

"(Bold behind the battle, in the open camp all-hallowed,
Patient, wise, and mirthful in the ringed and reeking town,
These endured unresting till they rested from their labours—
Little wasted bodies, ah, so light to lower down!)"

That is heart-breaking in its pathos. The italicised lines may rank with some of the greatest in Tennyson's "Rizpah."

But it is distinctly the "bisexual" element in the poet which here obtains utterance. The passion of love and pity in the line

"Little wasted bodies, ah, so light to lower down!"

is not male, it is utterly remote from all stormy exultation of sabre-sweeps and bayonet-charges; it is the very passion of the divine πνεῦμα, the tenderness of Christ, the everlasting pity of God.

We discern the same gentleness of feeling in the last stanzas of Mr Kipling's curious poem, "The Explorer."

"They will find my sites of townships
—not the cities that I set there.
They will rediscover rivers—
not my rivers heard at night.
By my own old marks and bearings
they will show me how to get there,
By the lonely cairns I builded
they will guide my feet aright.

"Yes, your 'Never-never country'—yes,
your 'edge of cultivation'
And 'no sense in going further'—
till I crossed the range to see.
God forgive me! No, *I* didn't. It's
God's present to our nation.
Anybody might have found it but
—His Whisper came to Me!"

What a pathos the emphatic use of the word "my" gives to that phrase, "not

"*my* rivers heard at night." The fervour of trust that had led the explorer on and on, his deep faith in God, his grasp of the unknown country as in some strange sense *his* country, given to *him* by "God's "whisper," all this is "bisexual," it springs from the most passionate unknown depths of the consciousness: it has in it a woman's sense of the possession of a lover, mixed with a man's sense of the possession of a bride.

One can hardly pay greater honour to the nobler side of Mr Kipling's genius than by saying that the "Dirge of Dead Sisters" may hold its own, even if placed beside some of Mrs Browning's most pathetic work. Take the last stanza of her "Cry of the "Children":—

"They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their look is dread to see,
For they mind you of their angels in high places
With eyes turned on Deity.
'How long,' they say, 'how long, O cruel nation,
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's heart,—
Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?
Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,
And your purple shows your path!
But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper
Than the strong man in his wrath.'"

That has the same note in it as Mr Kipling's "Dirge of Dead Sisters," the feminine note. Indeed, on reading Mrs Browning's poems again after an interval of many years, my first feeling was akin to amazement. The amazement lay in this, that it almost seemed that the necessarily pervading feminine note was absolutely *the* true note of poetry, the very thing that constitutes poetry, and without which poetry cannot exist.[1] I think, when Mr Swinburne used the expression "bisexual" in reference to great poets, he touched upon a truth deeper than he realised. One is almost driven to say that there is no such thing as masculine poetry at all, unless the metrical worship of the "God of Battles" be poetry. Even in Homer, it is not the description of savage combatants inflicting hideous wounds upon one another which is poetical, it is the description of the love of Hector and Andromache, and similar episodes.

All deep love has its terrible side. Passionate love of goodness implies equally

[1] I am not here dealing critically with Mrs Browning's poems, from the point of view of style. That is quite another question. Technically, of course, her poems were often very faulty.

passionate hatred of evil. The "Power "of the highest" that "overshadowed" the Mother of Jesus, that worked on the soul of Paul at his conversion, that has inspired saints and martyrs throughout all time, that creates the tender perfume of the lily and the passionate fragrance of the rose, is the same Power that moves sometimes through a great horror of darkness towards unutterable vengeance. In Mr Swinburne's "Dirae" we have an example of this side of love, the side that manifests itself as "the hate of hate," the scorn of evil. But here again it is the feminine element in the singer that throbs and speaks, it is the mother-soul of the universe hastening to the deliverance of her tortured and desecrated children. In the Sonnets of invective written when Napoleon the Third was expiating his sins and errors, we reach the culminating point of poetic fulmination against crime. But one of the Sonnets stands out with pre-eminent force and beauty. It gives expression to the intolerable agony of those who wake in boundless darkness to the sense of light wilfully rejected, in hopeless loneliness to the realisation of love proffered and deliberately scorned.

"She stood before her traitors bound and bare,
Clothed with her wounds and with her naked shame
As with a weed of fiery tears and flame,
Their motherland, their common weal and care,
And they turned from her and denied, and sware
They did not know this woman nor her name.
And they took truce with tyrants and grew tame,
And gathered up cast crowns and creeds to wear,
And rags and shards regilded. Then she took
In her bruised hands their broken pledge, and eyed
These men so late so loud upon her side
With one inevitable and tearless look,
That they might see her face whom they forsook;
And they beheld what they had left, and died."

In Mr William Watson's Sonnets on the Armenian massacres, and especially in his famous Sonnet "To the Sultan," there is the same cry of passionate love passing into passionate indignation. As the expression of noble anger at exceptional crime I think this group of Sonnets, and Mr Swinburne's Sonnets on Napoleon, stand in a place apart. In style Mr Watson's are Wordsworthian, while Mr Swinburne has always his own manner and his own adjustments of metre, but the spirit inspiring the two singers is the same spirit. Always, there is the underlying sense of the enormity of sin against children, against the weak and helpless, the sense that so pos-

sessed and penetrated Mrs Browning. It is precisely the instinct that found utterance in Christ's words referring to the judgment impending over those who should wound one of the "little ones" who believed in Him. It is the Christlike feeling towards the "little ones" which animates all such poetry, and this feeling is maternal. In so far as it is masculine, it is the masculine softened and purified by the maternal, and adding somewhat of its own natural force to the sentiment, but it is not inherently or originally masculine.

Swinburne's "Song of Italy" is another feminine poem, it is as feminine in note as Mrs Browning's "Cry of the Children." From my point of view, this, of course, is not to censure the poet or to disparage his work, but, on the contrary, to bestow upon him and his work the highest possible praise. To me it simply indicates that the singer, at the time he wrote, was open in the highest degree to the highest possible inspiration, the inbreathing of that πνεῦμα whose tenderness of love exceeds human conception.

To the angel who speaks at the beginning of the poem, Italy is as a wounded and stricken child:—

"Have Time and Love not knelt down at thy feet,
Thy sore, thy soiled, thy sweet,
Fresh from the flints and mire of murderous ways
And dust of travelling days?
Hath Time not kissed them, Love not washed them fair,
And wiped with tears and hair?"

And again:—

"O sweetest head seen higher than any stands,
I touch thee with mine hands,
I lay my lips upon thee, O thou most sweet,
To lift thee on thy feet
And with the fire of mine to fill thine eyes;
I say unto thee, Arise."

I think the reader will now easily grasp what I meant when I said that the note in Mrs Browning's poems was really *the* note of all noble poetry, just because it is the feminine note. Nothing could possibly be more touching and beautiful, more poetic in the highest sense, than those twelve lines which I have quoted from Swinburne's "Song of Italy," yet, save for the difference of style, they are just what Mrs Browning might have written,—they have in them a woman's yearning tenderness. It is curious that in Browning we find, relatively, much less of this. There are critics who would rank Browning as a higher poet on this account; to them he would seem more masculine. I can only

say that to me he seems less high, because less passionately and persistently tender. The three greatest poets of the nineteenth century, from the point of view which I am advocating, were undoubtedly Shelley, Mrs Browning, and Swinburne—in France Victor Hugo, who belongs to the same class, would make a fourth—because in those poets the quality of passionate tenderness was a persistent quality; it seldom failed them. Browning's tenderness, in fact, was generally inspired by Mrs Browning, which bears out my contention that it is the feminine organism which conveys to the world the most delicately pure love-currents.

Turning to Wordsworth, it is still the same. As Matthew Arnold points out, Wordsworth's true greatness consists not in his self-conscious philosophy, but in his unconscious poetry. Now in his philosophy it is the man who speaks, in his poetry it is the woman who speaks. It is impossible here to deal with so large a subject exhaustively, but it is well worth our notice that in "The Affliction of Margaret," one of Wordsworth's noblest poems, the passion throughout is the passion of tenderest, purest motherhood. Again, it is the passion of "Rizpah."

Keats is always feminine in sweetness and gentleness, though I absolutely decline to deduce from this that his character was wanting in manhood. When Mr Swinburne, in his "Miscellanies," wrote of Keats that "Neither his love-letters, nor the last "piteous outcries of his wailing and shriek-"ing agony, would ever have been made "public by merciful or respectful editors," he was writing and thinking below his own proper level. Keats died a death of extreme anguish, and his last thoughts were embittered by the sense of approaching final separation from the woman he passionately loved. But he showed no want of manhood, it was the strong loving manhood in him which suffered so keenly. Mr Swinburne himself is never at his highest when assuming—it is not his poetic natural manner —a sort of rough hyper-masculine tone. When, in a moment of strange blindness, he allowed himself to speak of the dying children of the Boers as "whelps,"[1] he gave us a clear example of the injury that can be effected by the unbridled male war-spirit.

But Mr Swinburne, at other moments, has shown us the exact contrary. In his lovely poems about children, he has mani-

[1] In the Sonnet which appeared in *The Saturday Review*.

fested a tenderness hardly to be found even among the noblest and tenderest of women. As some critic said, "There must "be unfathomable depths in the nature "which could produce such a poem about "a child as 'A Dark Month.'"

"I bless you! the blessing
Were less than a jest
Too poor for expressing;
I come to be blest,

"*With humble and dutiful*
Heart from above:
Bless me, O my beautiful
Innocent love!"

That pathetic cry comes straight from the very depth of the pure feminine, the divine feminine, in the soul of a great poet.

There is another point as to which the feminine influence in poetry works in a manner quite antagonistic to the masculine method. The feminine view of love is that it is the one supreme and wholly adorable thing, the end for which man and woman were created, the divinest joy of life, the power that re-opens Paradise. Six lines taken from the writings of a modern American poetess, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, give excellent expression to this feeling:—

"It was a Godlike separate existence;
Our world was set apart in some fair clime,
I had no will, no purpose, no resistance;
I only knew I loved you for all time.
The earth seemed something foreign and afar,
And we two, sovereigns dwelling in a star!"

That, as I say, is the feminine view, and it is the view expressed by all poets at their highest moments. But there is another way of looking at the matter. Listen to the following extract from Mr Stopford Brooke's valuable work on "The "Poetry of Robert Browning":—

"Passion began, in one form of it, "among the lower animals and still rules "their lives; it has developed through "many thousand years of humanity into "myriads of shapes in and outside of the "soul; into stories whose varieties and "multitudes are more numerous than the "stars of heaven or the sand of the sea-"shore; and yet whose multitudinous "changes and histories have their source "in two things only—in the desire to "generate, which is physical; in the desire "to forget self in another, which is spiritual. "The union of both these desires into one "passion of thought, act, and feeling is the "fine quintessence of this kind of love;

"but the latter desire alone is the primal "motive of all the other forms of love, "from friendship and maternal love to love "of country, of mankind, of ideas, and of "God."

This passage seems to me more charged with misapprehensions than any passage that occurs to my mind in any writer of equal weight. I think it represents an altogether lower view of love, a view based on Darwin and Schopenhauer, not on the higher instincts of men and women. If it was Browning's view—which I can hardly believe—then Browning was greatly inferior, as a poet, to his wife, to Shelley, to Rossetti, and to many others. I think Mr Brooke in the quoted passage is hardly writing at his highest, for his ideas are generally exceptionally lofty and spiritual. The fallacy seems to lie in this—that, for the moment, he is conceiving of love quite wrongly. Instead of arguing upward from "the animals," he should argue downward from the angels. Love is not an animal instinct purified, it is an angelic instinct partially degraded, but ever aspiring and striving upward towards its original source. We may approach love either from below, or from above. In the whole

chapter in the Browning volume entitled "Poems of the Passion of Love," Mr Brooke is approaching love from below. He is curiously possessed by the idea that love produces "isolated emotion," that two people who love each other passionately become linked together in the bonds of a common selfishness. To me the exact opposite seems to be the case. Love, as I conceive it, is not isolation, but expansion; it is the Infinite love reached and apprehended through the finite embrace. That is the woman's view—we have only to read the superb closing passages of "Aurora "Leigh" to become assured of that—and it is certainly the view of the highest poets.

"It is curious to think that so young a "creature as Browning was in 1833 should "have left the celebration of the love of "woman behind him, and only written of "the love which his *Paracelsus* images in "Aprile."

This must surely be based on some misconception. If it truly represents Browning, he must have been a very small poet indeed. Dante never "left the celebration "of the love of woman behind him." On the contrary, as Dante drew nearer and nearer to the unseen, he delighted to cele-

brate more and more in noble music the love of Beatrice. Her image grew upon his vision more and more, until at last his love for her became one with his love for Nature, humanity, and God. That is not "isolation." You may call it concentration, if you like, but it is a concentration which paves the way to an infinite overflowing of love, a rapture of universal passion. Love, at first a single star, ultimately brings all other constellations within the range of its vision.

"Art is much, but love is more.
O Art, my Art, thou'rt much, but Love is more!
Art symbolises heaven, but Love is God
And makes heaven." [1]

There is the complete answer to Mr Brooke's strange idea that the love of man and woman means isolation, exclusiveness, selfishness. That purely masculine notion is proudly refuted by a woman who was also a great poet; the reply to a mistaken rendering of Browning comes most aptly from the lips of Browning's wife.

[1] Mrs Browning's "Aurora Leigh."

THE DIVINENESS OF THE HUMAN

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I HAVE always felt that Dr Westcott's suggestion[1] that the next world might probably be much the same world as ours externally, but that we should regard it from a different point of view, that to us it would appear different, has in it the key to the whole universe-enigma. Flowers, the stars, the sun, the sea, even now, though actually the same things, appear totally different to different people, or to the same people in different states of mind. It is the inner self, the soul, which colours all things, which gives to the external world its true meaning, its real vitality. If perfect moral purity could be combined with perfectly healthy physical conditions, this earth would be heaven, and appear to us as heaven. The blue of the sea would gain immeasurable magic, the light of the stars an unimaginable splendour, the scent of the rose a sweetness inconceivable.

[1] In the "Gospel of the Resurrection."

The feeling to which Dr Westcott gave utterance is, I think, a growing feeling. That we human beings are, here on earth, inhabiting a potential heaven, and are ourselves, potentially, celestial beings, is a grand thought, and it carries with it consequences immense and far-reaching. The increasing sense of the innate divinity of man, and of the glory of his planet-home, shows itself in a variety of ways, some of which at first seem antagonistic to the Christian view of life, though I believe that in reality they simply illustrate, with ever-deepening emphasis, the meaning of the Incarnation, of the "taking of the manhood "into God."

Mr Robertson's able and scholarly book "Pagan Christs,"[1] should be carefully studied by Christian thinkers. It is written from the point of view of what is called "the higher criticism," and is destructive in its aim. But what I am concerned with is this, that its real tendency is to bring out more and more fully—as did another apparently iconoclastic work, Winwood Reade's "Martyrdom of Man"—the immense potential divineness of

[1] "Pagan Christs: Studies in Comparative Hierology." By John W. Robertson, 1903.

humanity, the long awe-inspiring upward struggle of the race. There is a terrible passage relating to human sacrifice which runs as follows:—

"If to die as a human sacrifice for human "beings be to deserve the highest human "reverence, the true Christs of the "world are to be numbered not by units "but by millions. Every inhabited land "in this globe has during whole ages "drunk their annually shed blood. Ac- "cording to one calculation, made in the "last century, the annual death-roll from "human sacrifice and female infanticide in "one section of British India alone was "fifteen hundred. Taking the sacrifices at "only a fifteenth of the total, we are led to "an estimate for past history beside which "every Christian reckoning of the 'army "'of martyrs' becomes insignificant. . . . "Thus have nameless men and women done, "millions of times, what is credited to the "fabulous Jesus of the Christian gospels; "they have verily laid down their lives for "the sin of many; and while the imaginary "sacrifice has been made the pretext of a "historic religion during two thousand "years, the real sacrifices are uncom- "memorated save as infinitesimals in the

"records of anthropology. Twenty litera-
"tures vociferously proclaim the myth,
"and rivers of tears have been shed at
"the recital of it, while the monstrous and
"inexpugnable truth draws at most a
"shudder from the student, when his con-
"ceptual knowledge becomes for him at
"moments a lightning-flash of concrete
"vision through the measureless vistas of
"the human past."

That is a very eloquent and noteworthy passage, and it is evidently written from deep conviction. But we may apprehend its true meaning, we may profit by its real teaching, while still retaining our absolute faith in the "historicity" of the "Jesus of "the Christian Gospels." "The thoughts "of men are widened with the process of "the suns," and we may be grateful to Mr Robertson for assisting at this widening, without at all conceding his position. The "army of martyrs" is certainly enormously enlarged; but the Christian would simply feel that the outpoured blood of all these "martyrs" was sanctified, that their death was, so to speak, ratified and sealed as of eternal import, by the yet more sacred blood shed upon Calvary.

In the same way all the writers, Unitarian

or Theistic, who during the past half century have dwelt more and more exclusively upon the human side of the life and character of Jesus, have really been exhibiting, with more and more of force and clearness, the divineness of the divine, by bringing out, more and more emphatically, the divineness of the human. Renan, Matthew Arnold, Theodore Parker, Channing, Mazzini, Stopford Brooke, Emerson, Haweis, Francis Newman, William Rathbone Greg, and many others — including also such women writers as Sara Hennell, Harriet Martineau, and Frances Power Cobbe— these have one and all done good service to humanity. They have, each in his or her different way and with various degrees of ability, helped to develop more and more among us the idea of the "divineness "of the human." The old rigid idea of the "Divinity" of Christ, as it was called, has become modified. But only to this extent, that the "taking of the manhood "into God" has proceeded many steps farther than was possible to the earlier ages, which, though they were called "ages of "faith," were in fact ages of a faith less deep and a belief less exalted than our own. The God in Jesus has absorbed into His

personality an ever-increasing volume of the human, and—which is more important than can as yet be very widely understood—the essential divineness of womanhood is also being gradually recognised. The chief task of the dawning centuries will be the apprehension of the link between Jesus and the feminine element in the universe: to put the matter in theological language, the "taking of the womanhood into God."

Turning to poetry, the most sensitive of the Arts, we naturally find an immense development in the idea of the divineness of the human. This development takes many forms, and we have witnessed a vast growth of humanitarian poetic sentiment springing up somewhat outside the lines of definite Christian thought. But, in so far as the sentiment is sound, it is never really antagonistic to the great Christian ideas. Mr Stephen Phillips, the author of "Herod" and "Ulysses," is most powerfully swayed by a current of passionate humanism: for those who can look beneath the surface it is evident that a deep sense of the divineness of the human is his dominant impulse. In his volume of miscellaneous verses there is a curious poem called "The Wound."

It is not long, and can only be quoted entire:—

"I dreamed that, having died, my soul was brought
Into the Presence. Many angels stood
Around, and with delight upon me gazed;
And higher I discerned the face of God
Diffusing silent universal bliss.
Then moved an angel towards me, and with joy
Addressed me, saying: 'Come and rest at last,
And having rested, then thou shalt rejoice.'
The heavenly company smiled on me sweet;
But I unbared my soul, and showed to them
That wound which never human word, or hope,
Or pity hath ever 'suaged; and at the sight
A strange disturbance on the spirits came,
And even a dimness on the face of God.
Then rose from God's right hand a gentle Form,
With silent eyes that said, 'Hast thou forgot?'
And He disclosed His branded brow and hands.
But I toward Him turning softly said,
'*Thy wounds are many, but Thou hadst no child.*'"

I do not think that the author was conscious of the slightest feeling of irreverence, when he penned the last line. The speaker in the poem is alone with his despair. The "wound" caused by the loss of the "child" is always open. He knows that it can never pass away. The child-face is always there, the child-hands are always clinging, the child-eyes are ever appealing. Even the sense of the tenderness of Christ cannot

soften the unalterable sorrow: impressed irrevocably upon the father's soul is the vision of the lost little one, and he knows that the whole contents of limitless heaven could not make up to him for the vanishing of the childish hands. Then he cries out, —and the cry has in it the piteous agony of all bereaved humanity,—

"Thou hadst no child."

Whatever that may be, it is not irreverent. It arises rather from a quite new grasp of the awful depth of human love, the terrible possibilities of human grief. I remember that in "Aurora Leigh" Mrs Browning exclaimed that the heart of human motherhood was conscious of loving secrets deeper and tenderer than even the angels themselves could imagine. Some such feeling was evidently in the mind of Mr Phillips. With immense force he realised just what the author of "Pagan "Christs" realised in the passage I have quoted: the bitterness of human agony, the pathos of what Mrs Browning has called "The Cry of the Human."

The increasing apprehension of the "divineness of the human," the divinity of

earth, is seen in a very marked degree, if we compare Dante's Sonnets in the "Vita "Nuova" with such sonnets written in our own time as those of Rossetti and Marston. I do not think it has ever been pointed out that in Dante's Sonnets expressive of his passion for Beatrice, Nature is never mentioned. Dante never speaks of a flower, he never refers to the sea. What a change has come over human love-thought since Dante's time! The sense of the fragrance of flowers, of the glory of the sky, of the wonder of the sea, seems in some strange mode to have become a part of human passion, never more to be eliminated from it.

"More deep, more living, shone her eyes that drank
The breathless light and shed again on me,
Till pale before their splendour waned and shrank
The sky and sea."

These lines, from Swinburne's "A "Century of Roundels," will illustrate my meaning, and one may take almost at random a sonnet from Marston's "All in "All" for a further example:—

"THY VOICE.

"Thy voice is in the sea's voice when it makes
A melancholy music to the beach.

Thy voice is in the winds when birds besiege
The twilight time with song. The stream that takes
Its way from out the hill by flowery brakes,
Hath in its tones the sweetness of thy speech;
At night, when all is still, and faint sounds reach
The ear of one who, having slept, awakes
Full of his dream, thy voice floats through the night
In music sad, as Autumn winds that blow
'Mid yellowing woods in the sun's waning light,
Compassionate, persistent, clear and low.
And, when the world is fading out of sight,
Thy voice shall whisper peace, and bid me go."

There is a further point in which the passion of Dante differs from that of Rossetti, our English Dante. It must not be forgotten that Beatrice, soon after her marriage to another, was removed by death. Dante's passion, therefore, was wholly ideal. It was never consummated upon earth, and this fact gives a special character to his sonnets. Dante was compelled always to conceive of the lady of his love as an angel acting upon his spirit from a higher sphere. Now in the case of Rossetti, the matter is quite different. To my mind there is even a nobler humanness in Rossetti's sonnets, for they were written of an actual wife. That she died tragically, and that Rossetti's thoughts and sonnets were afterwards uplifted towards the angelic sphere, gives a sad completeness to the

story, and links his love-experience to that of his great Italian predecessor. But the sonnets written by Rossetti in praise of his wife stand alone. They are unique in poetic history. The mingling of the human and the divine in them is a thing quite apart. The fact that the consummation of heavenly passion first took place upon earth completely differentiates the feeling from that of Dante. We get wonderful human touches of thought and emotion which are quite wanting in the "Vita Nuova." I believe, if we look deeply into the matter, we shall see that, assuming purity and self-surrender, it is always the most human love which is really the most divine. Maeterlinck has a beautiful idea in reference to human love. He says:—

"There is nothing that coalesces more "readily than earth and sky; if your eyes "have rested upon the stars, before enfold-"ing in your arms the woman you love, your "embrace will not be the same as though "you had merely looked at the walls of "your room." That precisely embodies my meaning. There is profound humanness in Maeterlinck's words. So, in Rossetti's sonnets, we find a humanness, and there-

fore, from my point of view, a divineness, which is wanting in the sonnets of Dante. The purity and sweetness of the woman, operating through a human organism, in our own well-loved world of flowers and sea-waves and sunshine, create a heaven which in a certain paradoxical sense heaven itself could not contain.

But I do not want the matter to rest upon mere assertion. Place two typical sonnets of Dante and of Rossetti side by side. The evidence as to which of the two poets possessed the larger and more human love-faculty will, I think, be overwhelming.

Take Dante first:—

"Ladies that have intelligence in love,
Of mine own lady I would speak with you;
Not that I hope to count her praises through,
But telling what I may, to ease my mind.
And I declare that when I speak thereof,
Love sheds such perfect sweetness over me
That if my courage failed not, certainly
To him my listeners must be all resigned.
Wherefore I will not speak in such large kind
That mine own speech should foil me, which were base;
But only will discourse of her high grace
In these poor words, the best that I can find,
With you alone, dear dames and damozels:
'Twere ill to speak thereof with any else." [1]

[1] From Rossetti's translation of the "Vita Nuova."

Now take Rossetti:—

"Sweet dimness of her loosened hair's downfall
About thy face; her sweet hands round thy head
In gracious fostering union garlanded;
Her tremulous smiles; her glances' sweet recall
Of love; her murmuring sighs memorial;
Her mouth's culled sweetness by thy kisses shed
On cheeks and neck and eyelids, and so led
Back to her mouth which answers there for all.
What sweeter than these things, except the thing
In lacking which all these would lose their sweet:—
The confident heart's still fervour: the swift beat
And soft subsidence of the spirit's wing,
Then when it feels, in cloud-girt wayfaring,
The breath of kindred plumes against its feet?"

"*Life touching lips with immortality.*" It is curious that we possess a prose criticism of Rossetti himself on this very line, full of deep significance. The line is the closing one of his sonnet on "A Venetian Pastoral, "by Giorgione," and Rossetti, in reference to it, wrote to his brother:—"I see nothing "too ideal in the present line. It gives "only the momentary contact with the "immortal which results from sensuous "culmination, and is always a half-conscious "element of it."

I think that observation of Rossetti's throws more light on his character, and expresses more fully his strange sense of

the humanness of the divine and the divineness of the human,[1] than any fact bearing upon his life yet discovered. We find in it exactly the instinct which lay at the very root of Rossetti's nature, which was wanting in Dante, and which accounts for Rossetti's failings as well as his virtues; the unalterable haunting instinct which in him was so intense as to produce pain quite as often as rapture,—the mystic ineradicable feeling of the immortality of apparently mortal beauty, the supreme value of humanly embodied and manifested emotion.

I cannot help recalling—though the sphere of thought is slightly different—the pathetic story of Catherine Earnshaw's, or rather Emily Brontë's, dream, as told in "Wuthering Heights." "Heaven did not "seem to be any home; and I broke my "heart with weeping to come back to "earth; and the angels were so angry "that they flung me out into the middle "of the heath on the top of Wuthering "Heights, *where I woke sobbing for joy.*" Bearing in mind this utterance and Rossetti's sonnets, one is almost tempted to say that a world in which woman can be so passionately loved, and which can itself be so

[1] The terms are almost interchangeable.

passionately loved by woman, is indeed well worth some vast passion of divine redemption in the soul of its Maker.

In Mr Hardy's book, "The Dynasts," we have a statement of the world-conflict from the precisely opposite point of view, the point of view of extreme pessimism. Mr Hardy has always realised the darker side of things with singular clearness. There is no place for hope in his drama. His spirits of the Overworld recognise only the *un*divineness of the human, the littleness of man, the futility of his passionate struggles and endeavours, and the remorseless onward march of a soulless Destiny. Thus:—

> "Spirit of the Pities.
> What is the creed that these rich rites disclose?
> Spirit of the Years.
> A local thing called Christianity,
> Which the wild dramas of this wheeling sphere
> Include, with divers other such, in dim
> Pathetical, and brief parentheses;
> Beyond whose reach, uninfluenced, unconcerned,
> The systems of the suns go sweeping on
> With all their many-mortalled planet train
> In mathematic roll unceasingly."

That is not very good poetry — the lines limp and are unmelodious — but it

well expresses the idea that weighs so heavily upon some minds; the idea that Christianity may be, after all, a mere "local thing," and that "the systems of "the suns go sweeping on," hurled along by blind mechanical forces, with no conscious Deity at the helm.

With almost amazing suddenness, as if intended as a corrective to these despairing dreams, came Dr Wallace's very remarkable book, "Man's Place in the Universe." With force and scientific knowledge the author maintains that the real object of the existence of the universe is to develop "a living soul within the perishable body" of man, and that this planet is the one spot chosen, the only possible spot, for the achievement of that end,—an end, bear in mind, of immeasurably greater importance than the mere mechanical arrangements of any number of stellar universes.

The real point is this. Has not Dr Wallace brought forward some very strong scientific reasons for believing that the old geocentric theory of the universe was, after all, not so far from the mark? Has he not enormously strengthened the cause of Religion, and put an entirely new weapon into the hands of the defenders of Christianity?

I am surprised that the Churches have not as yet clearly discerned this. He has placed in their hands the strongest and keenest sword that time has ever forged.

Can they not see that he is implicitly dealing the deadliest blow that has ever been dealt to that scientific[1] belittling of our planet, which made the Drama of Calvary appear but a local episode, beside the tremendous grandeur of the spectacle of endless inhabited worlds filling the enormous cosmic spaces,—each, doubtless, with its own tragedy of sin and redemption? It is not impossible that in this particular instance the original instinct of the Christian Church was a sound instinct. Christian thinkers felt, and justly felt, that the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ were events of such stupendous ethical, social, and spiritual import, that the planet upon which they took place *must* be a wholly exceptional orb, constructed and maintained for wholly exceptional and transcendentally important issues.

[1] Dr Wallace's point, of course, is that the older view is not really "scientific," but pseudo-scientific and mistaken. This accounts for the acrimony and bitterness which the statement of his theory seems to have raised in some quarters. The spirit of narrowness and dogmatism is by no means always confined to theology.

Orthodox science admits that this planet may be the only sphere that could have evolved life, "as we know it." But is not life, "as we know it," a thing of immeasurable value? Upon this planet, in some way, the idea has been reached that there resides an unfathomable divineness in the human, that "God is *love*," and that "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in "God, and God in him." We cannot conceive of a higher spiritual evolution than this. There *must* be something final and absolute about it.

So also, in a less exalted sphere, there must be something final and absolute in such ideas of beauty as those attained by Phidias, by Titian, by Michael Angelo. Moreover, if our star be indeed the centre of the stellar spaces, and the conscious pivot, so to speak, upon which the whole unconscious cosmos revolves, how vast becomes the importance of England—for the moment, the centre of the cosmic centre: how fateful must be English destiny!

But the spiritual side of the matter is the most profoundly moving and attractive. If Dr Wallace is right, we have been strangely misled. Our lordly science has suffered itself to be dazzled, as children

are dazzled. We have been blinded by the soulless glitter of countless suns and stars, mere golden lamps in God's palace, while the real central glory of the whole measureless cosmos—love, love as shown on Calvary—lay here, often disregarded, at our very feet.

THE FALL OF WOMAN

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"THERE *was war in heaven.*"[1] This single little phrase, it often seems to me, may throw light upon much that at first appears hopelessly puzzling in the long strange record of human love. For some years it has been the habit of English thinkers, following the lead of Huxley, Darwin, Spencer, Tyndall, to assume that the theory of evolution was a sufficient explanation of the history of the human race, and that the gradual uplifting of man from the animal sphere contained in it the key to the mystery of love. But does it contain the entire key? Is there not still a vast *residuum* of fact wholly unexplained either by the theories of "natural selection" or "sexual selection"? On the whole, I am inclined to think that, if we dispassionately survey the infinitely complex sexual situation as to-day placed before us, we shall be led to believe that though the Darwinian theory explains much, it does not

[1] Revelation xii. 7.

cover all the facts. There must be something more behind. It is certain that there has been an upward evolution; that we can see clearly. But there seems also, in the history of the race, to have been a downward evolution. What Darwin realised so forcibly may possibly have been the series of phenomena accompanying a rise, or an effort to rise, from an original fall. It is not impossible that the account of the origin of evil given in the Book of Genesis may contain in it a vast amount of literal world-truth. The expression I quoted from the Book of Revelation, "*there was war in* "*heaven*," with its context, seems to supplement the account given in Genesis, and it powerfully suggests the idea that in some way it was indeed the lapse of woman from her proper post of angelic interpreter of the sweetest and tenderest side of the Divine nature to man, which brought sin into the world. The more clearly we realise the difference, the measureless difference, between what woman is and what she might be, between what love is and what it should be, the more we shall be led to surmise that there must indeed have occurred in the remote past some terrible error, some soul-darkening catastrophe. In no other

way can we believe it possible that woman could have been so changed. For it is undeniable that the currents which flow through her delicately-balanced organism have been, as a matter of historic fact, currents of debased origin almost as often as of Divine impulse and suggestion.

I think we may take it that the key to the immense mystery can be found in the collection of wonderful documents which we call the Bible, and that the key lies in what I may call the spiritual Darwinianism which pervades, as it seems to me, those documents from first to last. Throughout the Bible—which, be it remembered, is by no means a wholly optimistic Book—runs the idea of an unceasing and passionate "struggle for life." But the Bible does not deal, as does Darwin, with a mere surface struggle. It takes our thought out of the visible sphere of things, and places before us a picture of terrible internecine warfare, perpetual warfare, waged between two opposite classes of angelic combatants. There is far more in the Bible than in "Paradise Lost" and the "Pilgrim's "Progress," but the Bible practically contains both these books, or, at any rate, the deep spiritual truths suggested by them.

"*There was war in heaven: Michael and* "*his angels fought against the dragon; and* "*the dragon fought and his angels.*" The moment that we grasp this idea of possible angelic *conflict*, grasp it as an actual fact, a fact as real as and of far greater moment than the wars we witness upon earth, we begin to get at the truth which I said must lie behind Darwin's theories; and when we realise that sex-issues may, nay must, play an important, or probably a determining part in this conflict, may indeed be the very cause and goal of it, we begin to gain light upon the darker side of human love, and upon its loftier aspects also.

"*The sons of God saw the daughters of* "*men that they were fair; and they took them* "*wives of all which they chose.*"[1] The expression "sons of God" in this context must refer to beings of a different race, but some critics have held that it does not necessarily refer to beings of a higher race. It has been believed that the "sons of "God" in this particular instance might have been some of the fallen angels, some of those against whom Michael and the higher angels are said to have "fought," and who were ultimately excluded from

[1] Genesis vi. 2.

heaven. But, guarding oneself against any over-speculative tendency, such a passage, none the less, makes one thoughtful. One can hardly help asking oneself, with more and more of wonder, what is the meaning of this strange beauty of woman, which even "the sons of God" longed to possess —but which we, we into whose human keeping it has passed for a time, often heed as little as the flowers we gather and fling away. The Bible, from end to end, is a Book saturated with a profound sense of the importance of this planet, and of the human race, the dually constituted human race; and it was evidently a leading idea of the greatly inspired men who wrote the Bible that at the very heart of the world-conflict stands woman, and that, in some mystical but most real way, two classes of angelic beings, a higher and a lower, have been for an enormous period of time—ever since the fall, whatever that may exactly imply—contending over her.[1] The Bible, in fact, presents us with a picture of the planet and humanity very nearly akin to that suggested by Dr Wallace in his "Man's Place in the Universe." Our

[1] There may be more of literal truth in Rossetti's poem, "Lilith," than the writer imagined.

world is regarded as in very truth the centre of things, and humanity, as we see it, is held to be in close connection with two unseen armies—here it is the Bible view more particularly that I am speaking of—who use our human nature, our bodies, our passions, our crimes, our virtues, our needs, our desires, as their weapons, and our earth as their battlefield. We are in no sense alone. We are placed, rather helplessly placed, exactly midway between two vast struggling hosts, and we feel, especially those of us who are "sensitives," the electrical currents, the stormy influences, proceeding from both groups of warriors. We hear the bugles sound from both camps, and we are often puzzled, startled, and confused. That, certainly, whether we like it or not, seems to be the Biblical statement of the position of man. It is not a pleasant position, and, as the Bible everywhere insists, it is extremely critical.

Moreover, "the angels desire to look "into" mortal affairs, finding our proceedings of vital importance to themselves, just as theirs are to us. There may be points, I sometimes think, in which our humanity, clothed with a garment of wonderfully wrought flesh, is superior to both

classes of battling angels. Some of them, as we have seen, if we take the suggestion literally, fell in love with the human beauty of "the daughters of men." More and more, as we ponder, the complexity increases. More and more we see what vast issues may really hinge on a right interpretation of the part that woman is meant to play in the world-drama, a part certainly very different from that which she to-day is playing. More and more we begin to understand how it is that her nature, mysteriously poised as it seems to be between some supreme Divine Beauty and some altogether lower Satanic attraction, has utterly puzzled thinker after thinker, sage after sage, poet after poet. We shall understand Hugo when, in a singular poem,[1] written in his old age and entitled "La Femme," he says:—

"Je l'ai dit quelque part, les penseurs d'autrefois,
Épiant l'inconnu dans ses plus noires lois,
Ont tous étudié la formation d'Ève.
L'un en fit son problème et l'autre en fit son rêve.
L'horreur sacrée étant dans tout, se pourrait-il
Que la femme, cet être obscur, puissant, subtil,
Fût double, et tout ensemble ignorée et charnelle,
Fît hors d'elle l'aurore, ayant la nuit en elle?"

. . . . . .

[1] In "Toute la Lyre."

"La femme est une gloire et peut être une honte
Pour l'ouvrier divin et suspect qui la fit.
A tout le bien, à tout le mal, elle suffit.
Haine, amour, fange, esprit, fièvre, elle participe
Du gouffre, et la matière aveugle est son principe."

. . . . . .

"Non, rien ne nous dira ce que peut être au fond
Cet être en qui Satan avec Dieu se confond.
Elle résume l'ombre énorme en son essence."

We shall also understand our own poet, Arthur O'Shaughnessy, when in a poem[1] called "Creation," he wrote:—

"And God said, 'Let us make a thing most fair,—
A Woman with gold hair, and eyes all blue':
He took from the sun gold and made her hair,
And for her eyes He took His heaven's own hue.

"He sought in every precious place and store,
And gathered all sweet essences that are
In all the bodies: so He made one more,
Her body, the most beautiful by far.

"Pure coral with pure pearl engendering,
Bore her the fairest flower of the sea;
And for the wonder of that new-made thing
God ceasèd then, and nothing more made He.

"So the beginning of her was this way:
Full of sea savours, beautiful and good,
Made of sun, sky, and sea,—more fair than they—
On the green margin of the sea she stood."

[1] In "An Epic of Women."

Gradually, I think, it will dawn upon us that, after all, we need the Bible theory, or revelation, of a fall from the angelic sphere to supplement Darwin's theory of an ascent from the animal sphere. It is very possible that man never had any business to enter the animal sphere at all. If it be true that God is a dual Being, that Christ's personality was the complete dual form of personality, and that it is only through being "clothed upon" with this dual nature that we can really be "*in* the "Lord"—mix, that is to say, with the Divine inner sweetness of the very heart of God—we begin to understand what the strange drama of human history may really mean. In some way, by some terrible blunder, or crime, the sexes have become separated and forced into a largely antagonistic relation; the life-currents, flowing straight from Christ and God, which woman should convey through her organism to man, have been intercepted and perverted; woman has become a tempter where she should have been a redeemer, and man has become a destroyer where he should have saved. All that should have been orderly and beautiful has become disorderly. Satan, in striking at woman, has struck right at

the heart of God, for, by introducing disorder into the unfallen feminine nature, he delivered a deadly blow at the purest and tenderest thing in the whole universe, and blocked the channel through which the purest and tenderest Divine life-currents should flow out to the world and to man. He, in effect, by degrading and poisoning her true nature, severed woman from God,[1] and, as a necessary consequence, to a large degree, though not wholly, separated man from God. The crimes, the wars, the horrors, the agonies, which have since ensued have been the inevitable sequel, the planned and purposed sequel, of this one stupendous stroke: Milton, in "Paradise "Lost," seems to have hovered on the verge of an apprehension of the truth, but never to have fully grasped it. The pollution of the soul of woman would, evidently and certainly, bring about results that would affect the whole condition, material and physical, of our planet. Such disorderly influences would be introduced into human

[1] A process which those human beings who wilfully injure and degrade woman in some measure repeat,—with the same necessary consequence of to some extent severing themselves from God; partly by producing in their own souls a chronic state of blindness as to woman's truer and higher nature.

life that a state of affairs might very well follow which, later on, would necessitate, for its amelioration, just such a huge upward effort as Darwin discerned and described. No words could possibly be found strong enough to picture the effect which would be produced on a hitherto happy and harmonious world by a successful attempt at the corruption of the higher side of humanity, for the woman was originally the higher side, by some insidious alien force. One can readily imagine that, if the Creator of our universe is indeed a dual Being, feminine and masculine in nature, as is clearly indicated in the Bible, and if the unfallen human woman was a direct emanation from the feminine side of God, and was expressly charged to convey to the world the glory, the tenderness, the beauty, resident in that side of the Divine—one can easily believe that, if this is so, any definite deterioration of the soul-structure of woman, any pervasion of her being by lower magnetic currents, would bring about a disaster almost inconceivable in its magnitude.

Let the mind swiftly travel through human history, think of the part that the "double" woman of whom Hugo speaks

has played, and then realise the condition to-day of our great cities; watch the faces of the poor fallen women in London streets at night, and realise that this horror of corruption, this slow decomposition of the diviner soul of humanity, attended by steady degradation of the physical nature as well, has gone on for numberless past ages; realise also that the actual base pleasure of destroying has been felt in some Satanic region of the universe throughout the centuries, and is being felt to-day; realise and ponder upon all this, and you will distinctly apprehend that the fall of woman, poetically described in the Book of Genesis, may be no mere legend, but the most vital, the most far-reaching, and the most terribly significant fact of all human and planetary history.

Such an event, as I say, would be far-reaching in its consequences. Its results would extend both infinitely upward and infinitely downward. Its reverberations, its reflex action, would travel from star to star; other races, on other planets, might be affected by it. It would bring about a divorce between the two essential sides, the two necessary poles, of Being, the masculine and the feminine, and would exercise a

disrupting influence upon the whole cosmos. Humanity seems to be placed in the central zone of existence, in direct connection with both upper and lower Powers.[1] If, as I suggested, we can hear the bugles sound from both camps of celestial combatants, it is probable that they also hear and are thrilled by the war-music, and still more by the love-music, of the human race. Looking even higher than this, we may surmise that unfallen man and woman must have been in such intimate contact, such inseparable alliance, such close organic touch, with their Maker, and the unfallen material world must have been in such hitherto indivisible union with man and woman, that a sudden violent divorce between the male and female sides of humanity—the Bible accounts of the Fall suggest extreme suddenness and violence—could not fail to react upon the associated masculine and feminine sides of the Divine Being; and also upon every flower, every

[1] "Pour qu'aucun échelon ne manque à l'infini,
Que l'azur divin reste aux ténèbres uni,
Que la transition des gouffres soit possible,
Il faut que l'homme soit; car, dans l'inaccessible,
Entre l'être d'en bas et les êtres des cieux,
Les humanités sont des ponts mystérieux."
"Dialogue avec l'Esprit," in Victor Hugo's "Dernière Gerbe."

delicate planetary structure, every sunbeam, every sea-wave, wrought by the hand and upheld by the loving force of that Being. It is not irreverent to say, indeed it seems a self-evident thing, that if man and woman, as originally constituted, were a part and portion of their Maker—"*in Him we live*, "*and move, and have our being*"—the terrible shock of the Satanic degradation of the human womanhood would be felt by the divine Womanhood. God, at that date in the world's history, if the Bible record be true, must have been in the closest sympathy with man.

Science is daily enabling us to understand more clearly what may have taken place, by enabling us more completely to realise the solidarity of all things. We can grasp the fact that the visible strife around us is only the outward manifestation of a far more deadly unseen battle, and that the victory or defeat of the higher forces upon our small planet may involve the victory or defeat of corresponding forces throughout the universe. We can infer that the fall of woman may have made the Incarnation a necessity, as a sort of divine counter-stroke. We are, in fact, brought back in a very

curious way, through what may be termed the theology of science, to something resembling the theology of Milton. The figures in Milton's Epic once more become real figures, indeed terribly real figures, though we are not compelled to conceive of their motives and actions exactly as he did. The Bible, which, during the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, was looked upon by many thoughtful people as a legendary work, full of anthropomorphic ideas and suggestions, is beginning, on the contrary, to stand out as in some respects an almost painfully literal and accurate summary of what has happened. It adds to human science its own divine science, and makes hitherto insoluble mysteries clear. Christ was much more than a great spiritual teacher, much more than the world's redeemer in a merely general and philanthropic sense; He came into acute personal contact with personal powers of evil, with the very powers, in fact, which plotted woman's fall. Woman, as originally formed, bestowed perfect love, which is endless life, upon man; perfect love, perfect joy, the passion that is one with holiness, the sense of the pure inner secrets of sunshine and starshine, the sense

of the beauty and wonder of the world of matter;[1] the sense—still felt by such poets as Shelley, Wordsworth, Swinburne, with extraordinary intensity — of some loving tender spirit within the sunsets, behind the mystery of the mountains, within the light and jewelled radiance of the sea. The contest between Christ, "*l'homme étoilé*," and "*Iblis, l'ange noir*,"[2] was no poetic dream or fancy. It was the most definite and actual conflict that history has witnessed, and it was fought, most distinctly fought, in behalf of life, love, woman—and in behalf also of the whole glory and splendour of Nature, for this glory, this splendour, vanish when woman, Nature's sovereign, passes under the control of evil. Christ's agony contained within it the intolerable agony of woman, and the pain—even deeper, if possible—of all angelic beings who, through epoch after epoch, have helplessly witnessed her agony and have vainly striven to save. The horrors

[1] In the great cosmic harmony woman seems to represent *matter*, man represents *force*. Matter and force in conjunction form the universe.

[2] " O ténèbres, le ciel est une sombre enceinte
Dont vous fermez la porte, oui, mais l'âme a la clé !
Et la nuit se partage, étant sinistre et sainte,
Entre Iblis, l'ange noir, et Christ, l'homme étoilé."
" Dernière Gerbe."

attendant upon Armenian and Macedonian massacres are brought tangibly before us, and we shudder as we read. Yet they are but a shadow compared to the age-long suffering of woman, the anguish which surpasses all other anguish, that of the higher soul trampled beneath lower instincts, and gradually itself forced to develop lower instincts in turn. If the original fault was hers, if in the first instance she yielded to some inconceivably subtle temptation, she has terribly expiated her error.

There is yet another side of the matter which does not seem to have received sufficient consideration. We know what incredible crimes have been committed upon earth through jealousy and the lust of revenge; we need only turn to the play of "Othello" to find a supreme dramatic statement of the darker side of human passion. But love and hate may both be immeasurably deepened and intensified in spiritual regions, and among spiritual beings. If it be true, as some religious writers have supposed, that man and woman, had they been found worthy, were to be exalted to the angelic *status*, were even to take the place of the angels

who had fallen[1]—or if the angels who "kept not their first estate" imagined that this was God's intention—we can understand that such works as Dante's "Divina "Commedia," Hugo's "La Fin de Satan," Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," far from being over-literal, are even, in a sense, under-literal. Not one of them, in spite of the power and range of the genius that speaks in each, would adequately render the passion of hate that may have lurked around that cradle of the human race, the far-off Garden of Paradise; hate only less deep, less enduring, less invincible, than the passion of love that watched over the infant humanity, and, ages later, drew

[1] There is another, and it may be a truer, way of looking at the matter. It is possible that humanity may be used, not to displace, but to restore, the fallen angelic creation. The human race, with its amazingly mixed and complex character—a character which we are only just beginning to understand—may be the only available link between unfallen and fallen angelic beings. In human beings, as at present constituted, there is something of the animal, something of the devil, something of the angel, and, we may say with perfect truth and reverence, something of God. Is it not possible that the divine fire of redemption could only reach a fallen angelic world through a fallen human world—a world possessing affinities both with fallen and unfallen angelic beings, and also, through Christ's humanity, inseparably linked to God? If there be any truth in this idea, the task set before the human race is indeed stupendous in its magnitude, and beyond all words sublime in its possibilities.

Christ from heaven to redeem and to restore; only less profound than the love which, on the human side, met the advancing Christ with such a cry of joy, such a passion of adoration. If the sin of Eve, in giving ear to some lower suggestion, was both the symbol and cause of the fall of woman, the act of one who washed Christ's feet "with tears" and wiped them "with "the hairs of her head" was the embodiment and symbol of woman's immense repentance.

It is well to recall that the historic degradation of woman has been so complete that it requires an effort—which women themselves often refuse to make — even to realise imaginatively what the higher womanhood might mean. We have to turn to very rare instances in human life in order to see it incarnated, and to the more sensitively organised poets to see it depicted. The dreams of Rossetti, both as poet and draftsman, were always of an ideal womanhood. The face of Beatrice in his great painting, "Beata Beatrix," was drawn from his memory of the face of his wife; but he introduced into the picture that strange sense of the immortality of human beauty

which always haunted him, the imperative suggestion of some deathless glory of perfect womanhood. Shelley's idea of woman was always of the unfallen woman. The woman he describes in "Laon and Cythna" is hardly modelled upon the human woman of the nineteenth century; the poet is dreaming of woman as she might have been in Paradise. We may incidentally observe that it was for this very reason that Shelley failed so completely to evolve a harmony from his actual love-life upon earth, and made so many astounding blunders. He never saw woman as she really is. He met the eyes of the unfallen Eve, and did not realise the significance of the change that has taken place. He did not understand that woman, having once allowed a lower magnetism to possess and dominate her, henceforth operated only partly as the accredited messenger from the Most High—partly also as the skilful and subtle exponent of dangerous and destructive forces.

I believe that, though the thoughtful women of to-day are confused and puzzled beyond measure, though they often claim their "rights" with almost hysterical violence, and though they are often leading us quite on a wrong track, they are, none the

less, absolutely right in their main idea—an idea which they insist upon with painful eagerness. They are right when they tell us that woman "belongs to God," that she is not made to be merely man's slave and chattel, and that she represents the higher side, because the more interior side, of Divine Being. She, in fact, represents, or ought to represent, the principle of Divine Love. She is intended to convey to man vibrations proceeding straight from the very heart of Being, divine vibrations without which he can in no real sense be said to exist. For humanity, as we see it around us to-day, is only a mutilated one-sided humanity, a phantom race. Men and women move along, each on their separate paths, and no true blending, no divine marriage, is possible. We have been tricked and misinformed, we have all been hopelessly misled. The "dual" manhood and womanhood has hardly as yet been developed or redeveloped among us. Probably the mystical writers on these subjects are very near the truth when they suggest that some vital change in the physical constitution of man was wrought when the catastrophe which we call "the Fall" occurred. Some profound bodily degrada-

tion took place,[1] and woman and man now approach one another under very imperfect conditions. They have, as a rule, lost the power of conveying to one another, consciously and organically, divine life-currents. It is likely that our notion of what love ought to be is so far below the true idea that it can hardly be said to involve any adequate conception of love at all. Love, even as the poets conceive it, is a weak and frail thing compared to the spiritual reality. There is, somewhere in the universe, a sex-love, unspeakable in its purity, inconceivable in its intensity, and a joy of which we can hardly dare to dream.

If these thoughts have any validity, the sexual problem becomes more easy to understand, though it is impossible to deny that it becomes at the same time infinitely more complex, and also darker and sadder. If God be "dual," if this vast universe is conducted and can only be conducted on a sex-basis, and if it is that sex-basis which was attacked by an antagonistic Power at the time of "the Fall"—and I think something like this is beginning to be the view of the matter

[1] It is the age-long effort to rise from this degradation which we see, and call "evolution."

held by the deepest and most thoughtful modern minds—then man and woman are in a position more serious, and the Bible is more tremendously true, than we have ever imagined. We ought not to become pessimists—against despair and pessimism we ought most strongly to struggle, but we cannot fail to realise that the optimism which prevailed among religious writers some twenty or thirty years ago, and which so largely coloured human thought up to the close of the last century, was somewhat shallow, somewhat premature. Men were, in fact, a little over-hopeful. Writers like Emerson, Theodore Parker, Channing, Frances Power Cobbe, Stopford Brooke, Charles Kingsley, filled as they all were with a noble passion of love for God and humanity, did not altogether realise the darker side of things, and, in especial, they did not see the deeper and more terrible questions raised by the sex-problem as we see them. It is a long cry from the thought of Emerson to the thought of Thomas Hardy, but we can scarcely doubt that Mr Hardy's pessimism does in truth represent the main current of modern ideas better than the eager hopefulness of Emerson. When, at the end of "Tess of the d'Urbervilles," Mr Hardy

wrote, "'*Justice*' *was done, and the Presi-*
"*dent of the Immortals* (*in Æschylean phrase*)
"*had ended his sport with Tess*," he wrote, I think, some of the saddest words in human literature, but he wrote words which must to-day find a responsive echo in thousands of human hearts. For, when he wrote those words, Mr Hardy had in his mind what so many feel and saw what so many see—that there are inexorable world-forces which torture human beings by leading them into impossible situations, as Tess and her husband were led—and that behind those forces, sometimes apparently directing them, stand conscious unseen spiritual personalities,[1] who, it would almost appear, take delight in human agony, and make "sport" out of our love and our sorrow.

Still, even here, we are brought back to our main thesis. If Clare had been a stronger and more percipient man, if he had realised that the forces of convention were as nothing compared to the force and majesty of love, if he had only been able

[1] The Bible is loaded with this idea, from cover to cover, and the Greek tragedies are full of it. Maeterlinck to-day frequently touches upon it. But the optimists of the last century only dwelt upon the brighter passages in the Bible, and the deep sadness of the real Greek mind they did not discern at all.

to grasp that on that fateful wedding-night he and Tess stood face to face with unseen powers, powers which were at that moment shaping their entire future destiny, and that he was called upon to make a solemn choice, "brief and yet endless," a choice which might, as in fact it did, decide the course, for joy or despair, of many other lives—if, in particular, he had understood that through the eyes of Tess the eyes of his one chosen fellow-spirit looked out upon him, a fellow-spirit chosen for him perhaps ages before his or her birth into their present bodies, and wrestled for, it may be, in previous forgotten or almost forgotten existences [1]—if he, the lover, could, in one vast flash of thought, have apprehended the exact position in which he and the loving, appealing woman stood—then, most surely, his love and the woman's love united would have

[1] "I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell:
I know the grass beyond the door,
The sweet keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

"You have been mine before,—
How long ago I may not know:
But just when at that swallow's soar
Your neck turned so,
Some veil did fall,—I knew it all of yore."
"Sudden Light."—ROSSETTI.

surged into a torrent of God-power that would have swept away for ever all demons and demoniac suggestions; there would have been no further "sport" for "the President "of the Immortals"; the angel in the husband would have blended with the angel in the bride, there would have been no darker side of human love, but only light, joy, peace, the youth that becomes eternal through the love that is eternal.

It is well also to bear in mind that if, as I have been suggesting, the shock of the Fall of woman was felt throughout the whole material universe, that whole universe, on the other hand, would instantly be thrilled into diviner life by her redemption and restoration. The glory of the sun poured over wide expanses of sapphire sea, the mystery of the starlit heaven, the golden or fiery radiance of an August sunset, the splendour of one perfect crimson rose—each of these things would affect in some way a loveless gazer, but would produce a wholly different impression upon two eager-hearted lovers. The loveless eyes would discern only the outward glitter of stars and sun, only the external brightness of the sunset, only the red material

brilliance of the flower. But the souls of the lovers would commune with the spiritual force which lies behind and within sunlight and starlight, the force which *is* Light, for it is Love: the souls of the woman and man, drawing upon the inexhaustible powers of the mingled Divine magnetism which only the impact of sex upon sex can generate, would pierce past the red petals of the rose to the soul of the rose. For within each star there is the soul of a star, and within each rose the soul of a rose. But we cannot understand this without woman's help, for without her there would be neither fragrance in the rose nor spiritual glory in the starlight. It is her redeemed and transfigured soul, and the feminine passion for pure beauty deepening ever within the heart of man, which will ultimately enable us to behold the world robed in its resurrection-raiment: to see woman as God sees woman, and the rose as its Maker sees it.

There is not a single star throughout the measureless regions past which the star-rays travel; not one smallest blossom amid the unending multitude of flowers whose scent each summer fills forest upon forest, meadow after meadow, hillside beyond hillside; not one bluest wavelet among the innumerable

ripples of lake or river or sea; there is not one of these which will not in some way, not merely metaphorical but strangely literal, respond to the sceptre of woman the slave when she becomes woman the queen. No lily can win its noblest whiteness, no iris its true royal purple, no rose its most passionate perfume, till woman herself is restored to her rightful empire. For only with the eye of love can we discern the glory of the outward universe; that glory resides not in material things, but in our loving apprehension of them. It is the human passion of love that bestows its passionate beauty upon rose and lily, its golden splendour upon sun and star, and to create and sustain that passion of noble love in the heart of humanity is, and will ever increasingly be, the prerogative of woman.

SCIENCE AND SYMPATHY

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SCIENCE AND SYMPATHY

"For my part I would rather the whole "world were Anti-vivisectionist, and the "progress of science, notwithstanding her "beneficence to suffering humanity, ar- "rested, than that the people should cease "to progress in that attribute of their "profoundest welfare, the love of man, "an attribute that can never, I think, be "sound if it does not necessitate the love "of the lower creation. The cruelties of "sport, fashion and science are greater "blots upon our humanity than the crime "against which the States contend. . . . "Many of the accusations made by Anti- "vivisectionists against the physiologists "are absolutely true."

This passage from Dr Greville MacDonald's letter in reference to the Bayliss *v.* Coleridge action, published in *The Daily News*, seems to sum up the matter with great clearness, from the humanitarian point of view. The sentiments are those that we should expect from the son of

George MacDonald, the poet and spiritual thinker.

Indeed, no one possessed of the slightest poetical or humane instinct can help regarding with grave apprehension the increase of Vivisection in England during the past thirty years. As Dr MacDonald points out, the practice of vivisecting animals for the simple purpose of illustrating already known truths sprang up about twenty-five years ago, and is absolutely opposed to the teaching of that great surgeon, John Hunter. During these twenty-five or thirty years an immense change has passed over medical opinion, and it is a change which, from the higher and more spiritual point of view, is all for the worse. It is a change in the direction of an ever-increasing callousness, an ever-deepening indifference to suffering.

I think that in the arguments upon the subject there is often an unnecessary confusion of ideas. It is too generally assumed that knowledge, knowledge as such, is a thing worth acquiring at any cost, or at almost any cost. But is this so? Is it not possible that there are many things which it may be better for us *not* to know? The late Bishop of Durham, when preach-

ing upon this question in Westminster Abbey, said that he could not think it possible that God could have so ordered the universe, as that any knowledge which it was really for our benefit to acquire could only be procured by such terrible means. Surely he was right. What is it that we are really seeking? What is the highest goal that man can reach? I think all truly thoughtful and earnest people will reply that an increase of love, pity, sympathy, tenderness, is the thing to strive after most passionately, most unceasingly; not by any means a mere accession of physiological knowledge.

Love, pity, sympathy, tenderness, are themselves in a measure material things, and can be to some extent dealt with by science. The emotions of love and sympathy undoubtedly depend upon most subtle and complex nerve conditions, and the brain which affords scope for the manifestation of such emotion is a delicate and intricate structure, built up late in the course of evolution, and easily arrested in its finer and more spiritual process of growth. Such leaders of thought as Tennyson, Browning, Hugo, Martineau, Ruskin, are men whose brains and nervous systems have

attained the degree of development requisite to enable them to exhibit the noblest qualities of which humanity is capable: love, pity, tenderness, sympathy. These qualities are the highest, and the nearest to the godlike and angelic; just as instincts of cruelty and hate are the lowest, and the nearest to the fiendlike.

Now the brain development which enables love and pity to be manifested is the most difficult thing in the whole universe to produce. It has taken measureless ages of evolution to evolve and co-ordinate the immensely complex groups of delicate nerve centres which enable the sensations of pity and tenderness to be experienced. Now that they have been produced, shall we turn back and content ourselves with a lower ideal? It is not, perhaps, very difficult to arrest the current of spiritual progress in humanity—represented, of course, on the material side by increasing fineness of nerve structure — and to deflect that slender stream into wrong channels. This, I think, Vivisection is helping to do. And, in so doing, the practice can never be really beneficial, but, on the contrary, must be productive of the deadliest and most irreparable harm.

Let us not allow ourselves to be led aside by specious and plausible arguments. The Anti-vivisectionists, as Dr Greville MacDonald pointed out, may make serious mistakes. They may not always be perfectly wise or judicious. Their physiology may not always be absolutely sound. But, none the less, they are undoubtedly fighting on the right side. To call people who are struggling so earnestly in the cause of the humaner instincts weak or womanish or hysterical, is foolish. The Anti-vivisectionists are fighting against a real and increasing evil, an evil which, if not dragged into the broad honest daylight, and there most strenuously combated, will in a few generations completely alter the character of English students of medicine. Those who have noticed the difference in the view of what constitutes cruelty among the younger medical students of to-day as compared with those of some thirty years ago, will, I think, confirm this statement.

The public does not realise how grave the matter is. Medical men, naturally, support each other, and a vast deal of what goes on is utterly unknown to the general world. It is so difficult to speak the real truth on this question without

being accused of sensationalism, and doing harm. But those who know the truth will bear me out in saying that the condition of things on the Continent is unspeakably appalling, and that this condition of things is rapidly spreading here. The "big brown "terrier" who figured in the Bayliss case is only a single victim among myriads. And each act of cruelty does its unerring work in rendering the spectators of that act more indifferent to the infliction of torture, less sensitive as to natural and simple moral distinctions.

Then there is another point. More and more, for good or evil, women are beginning to study physiology, and to take active part in medical practice. What they ought to bring into the medical arena is increasing gentleness, many womanly and kindly intuitions, the action of a keener and swifter sympathy, a tenderer touch, something of the knowledge of the man combined with somewhat of the instinct of the angel. But will they do this, can they do this, if we compel them to accustom themselves to the "horrible sights" Dr Greville MacDonald speaks of? Are we not, when we permit ourselves to torture and mutilate helpless

animals, doing even worse than this? Are we not mutilating and destroying the fine feminine susceptibilities of the girl-students who have to witness such experiments? Are we not irretrievably injuring the delicate sympathies which might lead in the end to the discovery of far deeper and more important physiological truths than any that can be reached by the infliction of needless torture?

We must remember that the feminine faculty of tenderness is the saving factor in a coarse and selfish world. If we teach women to be cruel, our folly will react upon ourselves in unforeseen and terrible ways. In a certain sense pity and tenderness, being the faculties latest evolved—there is little trace of their existence in ancient history—are also the frailest and the most easily destroyed. If they could be extirpated, and Vivisection seems to have set itself of deliberate purpose to extirpate them, the world would be morally lost. No amount of scientific knowledge, no fabulous increase of material comforts or luxuries, would ever compensate mankind for the loss of its one most priceless faculty, the gift of loving tenderness.

It is not any question of anæsthetics here,

or anæsthetics there. The law as to anæsthetics will never be perfectly or completely applied. It never can be. It can always be evaded. The "hellish oorali" of which Tennyson spoke can be used, and can destroy the possibility of muscular movement, while even intensifying the sensitiveness of the nerves. The real question is as to whether we wish to develop in our medical schools[1] the higher or the lower instincts: the instinct of cruelty or the instinct of sympathy. With great truth Dr Greville MacDonald wrote: "I believe "there is evidence in abundance that the "students of those medical schools where "the misery of suffering is least regarded "in physiological laboratories, evince the "least gentleness in handling the patients "in the hospitals."

But our English medical men have hitherto been so pre-eminently distinguished for a wide and strong humanity, that one feels that some bewildering, almost magic, change must have come over them. It is scarcely credible that descendants of great

[1] The effect upon the very numerous assistants and attendants has also to be considered. What must be the condition of mind of those who have to feed and look after the unfortunate, mutilated, three-parts dead but not quite dead animals, from operation to operation?

English practitioners who some thirty years ago were such eminent examples of kindness and gentleness, should to-day be found supporting methods so barbarous. I recall to mind such large-hearted physicians as Russell Reynolds, such humane surgeons as Berkeley Hill. Would not they have been deeply grieved at the turn things are taking? Would not they have felt—as I am sure hundreds of medical men must to-day be feeling, if their voices could only be heard—that, beyond and above all things, it is necessary that the honour of the English medical profession should be kept pure and stainless? And is not that honour one with a reputation for humanity and manliness?

Mere professional *esprit de corps* is often a most unsafe and misleading thing. To medical men themselves—to their higher against their lower selves, if need be—I appeal. I am ready to believe that in private life many of those who preach Vivisection may be the most humane and honourable of men. They are blinded by the narrowness of view caused through permitting themselves to be too completely possessed by one idea—the idea that acquisition of knowledge is desirable at any cost.

It is not well that the poorer classes should every day be drawn with more and more of reason to the conclusion that the English medical men who regard the sufferings of animals as of so little account, will regard *their* sufferings as of equally little account, when opportunities arise for ruthless scientific experiment. It is not well that English medical students, during the course of an important trial, should applaud every utterance making for the maintenance of Vivisection. Vivisection is, in any case, so revolting that Englishmen should feel that if in isolated instances the thing may be necessary, it is a thing that should be spoken of with pain—never joked about or exulted in. It is not well that the two Swedish ladies who did their honest utmost under very difficult circumstances to give evidence should have been derided. Were there no English girl-students, who, in the name of their own womanhood, could have come forward and supported those Swedish ladies?

Thirty years ago it was possible for Moncure Conway, in his "Earthward "Pilgrimage," to write of men of science as the inspired prophets of the new era. We then believed that the mantles of the

apostles had in some sort fallen upon Huxley, Tyndall, and their coadjutors. They were preaching, we thought, a crusade against all cruelty, all untruth, all injustice. We thought that they were leading mankind on in a noble conflict against the narrowness and credulity of the Churches. We may see from Mr Swinburne's "Songs "before Sunrise" how deeply in sympathy a great poet could be with the scientific thought of the day. To him, writing about the year 1870, science was one with all humane and beneficent instincts. We may find, too, in the writings of George MacDonald and other men of his stamp, ample evidence of the esteem in which science was held, and of the splendid results which were looked for from its growth and progress.

But now? All, alas! is changed, terribly changed. It is now Science, not the Church, who stands forth as the apostle of cruelty and intolerance. It is now Science who claims infallibility and the right to dogmatise, to persecute, to inflict suffering. Uplifted from the hell of the Churches, we are falling into a hell prepared for us by a pitiless and unintelligent scientific code.

I use the word "unintelligent" advisedly. For all real enlightenment is on the side of humaneness. It is well that Mr William Watson, that true poet, should have come forward as a prominent champion of the Anti-vivisectionist cause. Who can doubt that such poets and thinkers as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Tennyson, Shelley, would have eagerly joined hands with him? Depend upon it, the instincts of poets, as also those of refined women, count for a great deal in this matter. The uninstructed and unimpeded male instinct is not a safe guide. It needs the divine instinct, speaking through the feminine and tender heart of humanity, to lift and to enlighten. It needs also the poetic instinct to purify and inspire.

Victor Hugo, in a poem entitled "Le Droit de l'Animal," wrote:—

"Oui, l'homme est responsable et rendra compte un jour.
Sur cette terre où l'ombre et l'aurore ont leur tour,
Sois l'intendant de Dieu, mais l'intendant honnête.
Tremble de tout abus de pouvoir sur la bête.
Te figures tu donc être un tel but final
Que tu puisses sans peur devenir infernal,
Vorace, sensuel, voluptueux, féroce,
Echiner le baudet, exténuer la rosse,
En lui crevant les yeux engraisser l'ortolan
Et massacrer les bois trois ou quatre fois l'an?

Ce gai chasseur, armant son fusil ou son piège,
Confine a l'assassin et touche au sacrilège.
Penser, voilà ton but ; vivre, voilà ton droit.
Tuer pour jouir, non. Crois-tu donc que ce soit
Pour donner meilleur goût à la caille rôtie
Que le soleil ajoute une aigrette à l'ortie,
Peint la mûre, ou rougit la graine du sorbier ?
Dieu qui fait les oiseaux ne fait pas le gibier."

That is the true issue, truly stated. The point is as to whether, at this commencement of a new century, we in England are to take the more spiritual, or the less spiritual path. The day when English medical science deliberately elects to take the lower road—as there are now many signs that she intends doing—may be a very dark day for England. The past has been rough and brutal enough, God knows. We have had prize-fighting, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and all kinds of cruel and unmanly sports. But we have not yet had to endure in London the sight of helpless animals deliberately tortured for days and weeks, not in order to discover unknown *data* that may help us, but simply in order to illustrate perfectly simple and well-known points. The peculiar and separate iniquity of the thing lies in the fact that the practice of Vivisection is a complete abuse of trust. We

are trusted to rule over the animal world, but, if we grossly abuse our trust, we may bring down upon our heads penalties of which we little dream. There is a spiritual as well as a material side to all these things. How do we know that by such experiments we are not giving a powerful leverage to evil forces, the scope and possibilities of whose hostile action against us we may not in the least be able to understand? Deep spiritual thinkers have spoken words of solemn warning as to this; words of warning which we ought not to treat lightly.

If Vivisection increases in England during the next fifty or eighty years at the rate at which it has increased during the past thirty years, what will be the condition of mind of medical men and medical students, both male and female, at the end of that term? That is what we have to face. The effect of Vivisection will be that of a sore place, covered up from sight, but continually suppurating and discharging offensive matter. The moral results will spread and spread, showing themselves in a thousand unlooked-for ways, till the men to whom the healing work of the future is to be entrusted become more and more unworthy

of that trust. More and more, the orthodox schools of science will be looked upon —the process is evidently going on under our eyes — with dislike and disapproval. More and more, humble people—the *petit peuple*, to use the French expression—will turn towards Christian Science, and various heterodox forms of faith and practice. More and more, the application of hospital funds will be inquired into, and questioned. And, if it should be found to be the case that subscriptions given in honest faith and trust are largely used for purposes for which they were never intended, there will rise up a great cry of pain and anger, the result of which may very much surprise some fanatical devotees of science.

Harm has been done, and no doubt will be done, by intemperate writing on the side of humanity. The matter is one in which very strong feelings are enlisted on both sides, and violent language should be carefully avoided. Over-sensational expositions injure the cause they advocate. But I think it must be admitted that medical men who recklessly produce upon the minds of thoughtful and sensitive persons the impression that institutions which should

be homes of healing are becoming chambers of torture, show little real grasp of the grandeur of their own calling, and take upon themselves a very serious responsibility.

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